

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK PRESENTS IMPORTANT CHINESE ART FROM THE FUJITA MUSEUM

EVENING SALE ON MARCH 15 AT 7PM

31 RARE AND IMPORTANT CHINESE PAINTINGS AND WORKS OF ART

ALL WORKS COLLECTED BY FUJITA DENZABURŌ AND HIS SONS



LEFT: An Important and Extremely Rare Bronze Ritual Ram-Form Wine Vessel, *Gong*, late Shang dynasty, 13th-11th century BC (estimate: \$6,000,000-8,000,000)



RIGHT: Chen Rong (13th Century) as Catalogued in *Shiqu Baoji*, *Six Dragons* (estimate: \$1,200,000-1,800,000)

New York – On March 15, Christie's will offer [Important Chinese Art from the Fujita Museum](#), a selection of 31 Chinese works of art, including highly important Shang and Zhou dynasty ritual bronzes, classical paintings, Buddhist stone sculptures, celadons and scholar's objects. All of the works were collected by Denzaburō Fujita (1841–1912) and his two sons, Heitarō Fujita and Tokujirō Fujita, who were amongst the premier collectors of Asian art the Kansai region of Japan. Until World War II, the Fujita family acquired Chinese art exclusively through leading dealers Yamanaka & Company, for Chinese works of art, and Tanimatsuya (Toda Gallery), for Japanese art and tea wares. All of the Chinese objects in the sale were in the Fujita Collection prior to 1940.

The Fujita Museum



LEFT: Fujita Denzaburō **RIGHT:** Exterior of the Fujita Museum, Osaka

Located in Osaka, the Fujita Museum ranks among Japan's most eminent cultural institutions. The museum was founded in 1954 to exhibit works collected by the entrepreneur Denzaburō Fujita (1841–1912) and his sons, Fujita Heitarō and Fujita Tokujirō. The Fujita Museum collection comprises over 2,000 Japanese and Chinese works of art, including exceptional painting and calligraphy, Buddhist art, early bronzes, lacquerwares, textiles and tea utensils. The Museum's prominence is exemplified by its nine National Treasures and fifty-two Important Cultural Properties, the most of any private museum in Japan.

ARCHAIC BRONZES:

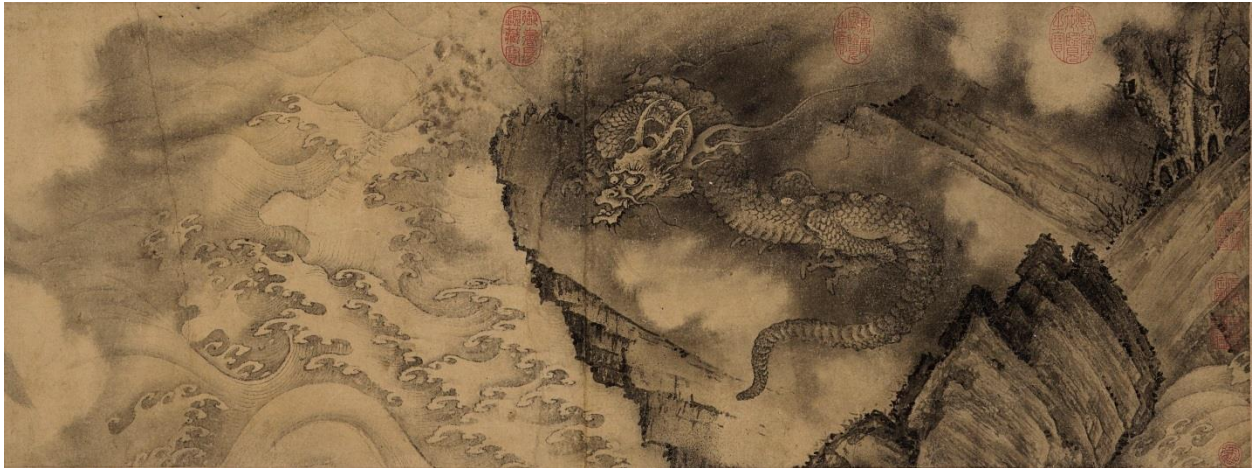


LEFT: A Magnificent and Highly Important Bronze Ritual Wine Vessel, *Fangzun* (estimate: \$6,000,000-8,000,000) **CENTER:** An Extremely Rare Massive Bronze Ritual Wine Vessel and Cover, *Pou* (estimate: \$4,000,000-6,000,000) **RIGHT:** A Magnificent and Highly Important Bronze Ritual Wine Vessel and Cover, *Fanglei* (estimate: \$5,000,000-8,000,000)

The auction includes four early Chinese bronze masterpieces— three extremely rare massive vessels and an extraordinarily rare ram-form *gong*. Each of these vessels date to the late Shang dynasty, 13th-11th century BC, and was intended to function as a container for wine. Serving in conjunction with a range of

other vessel forms intended to contain either wine or foods, such vessels were used by the nobility in ritual ceremonies in which offerings of food and wine were presented to the ancestors.

CHINESE PAINTINGS:



Chen Rong (13th Century) as catalogued in *Shiqu Baoji*, Six Dragons, handscroll, ink on paper (estimate: \$1,200,000-1,800,000)

The collection of the Fujita Museum includes several important Chinese paintings and calligraphy, most from the Song and Yuan dynasties. Highlights amongst these are these is the six handscrolls that were formerly part of the collection of the Qianlong Emperor (1711-1799), as evidenced by his collector's seals and their inclusion in his official catalogue, the *Shiqu Baoji*. The Qianlong Emperor's collection was one of the largest and finest ever assembled in world history.

Six Dragons, attributed to the Song-dynasty painter Chen Rong (active ca. 13th century), presents a visually impressive image of six dynamic and muscular dragons amidst swirling mists and turbulent water. Although a highly educated and ambitious government official, Chen Rong's greatest success came for his fabulous paintings of dragons.

BUDDHIST SCULPTURE:

The Fujita Museum sale also includes three important early Buddhist sculptures— a testament to Fujita Denzaburō's interest in preserving Buddhism in Japan. Amongst the Buddhist highlights is a superbly carved marble stele featuring at the center a seated Buddha, probably the historical Buddha Shakyamuni (*illustrated right*, estimate: \$600,000-800,000). The Buddha is flanked on either side by a standing *bodhisattva*, each with his hands clasped before his chest in *anjali mudra*, a gesture indicating veneration. A roaring lion crouches at the foot of each *bodhisattva*. The figures are set before an intricately embellished lotus-petal-form *mandorla* and are raised on a table-like plinth bearing an inscription dating it to the second year of Xiaochang (AD 526) of the Northern Wei dynasty.



LONGQUAN CELADON:



Amongst the other Chinese works from the Fujita Museum Collection are three large and impressive Longquan vessels exhibiting the luminous subtle green glaze with jade-like luster for which the Longquan kilns are so famous. Dating to the Yuan-Ming dynasties, these vessels have considerable presence and it is likely they were intended for display, rather than common use.

The large Yuan dynasty 'phoenix-tail' vase from the Fujita Collection is of elegant form and bears graceful sprig-molded peony sprays and scrolls (illustrated left, estimate: \$200,000-300,000). The glaze is especially fine and even, and of the ideal bluish-green tone much admired in China and in other parts of Asia.

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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